

WALKING WITH JESUS, WHERE HE WALKED

Luke 2:1-20

December 24, 2019

Christmas Eve, the night before Jesus' birth. This is where it all begins for Jesus, and for our walk with Him. In 1989 I was in Israel, with a group from the Episcopal Church where I had my church home. 30 years ago, that's a long time, almost Jesus' entire life span.

It was the beginning of a new life for me, although I didn't know it at the time I was walking in Israel. You see two days after I arrived home, my father, with whom we were living since the death of my mother, fell and broke a hip. The day after that, my first husband announced he was moving out, to clear his head, he said. Two years later we were divorced.

As I reflect back, it is with gratitude that I was in that place. Without knowing it at the time I was gathering strength for what was to come. With no voice, because of laryngitis, I listened to my fellow pilgrims sing God's praise. Especially vivid in my memory is standing in the Chapel of the Ascension. The voices of my fellow travelers were the voices of angels ministering to me.

I spent 10 days in Israel. 10 days walking where Jesus lived and walked. 10 days to wander through his life. 10 days of gathering strength from the very earth to carry me forward into an unimagined future.

My faith and devotion to spiritual disciplines may have waxed and waned over the years. I have had good and bad days and years. But as did Mary, I have treasured and pondered things in my heart. I have memories of walking on the ground where Jesus walked, and hearing the Gospels read in the places where they were lived out. And those memories have sustained and healed me through the ups and downs of life. Alleluia.

Prayer: Gracious God, by the gift of Your Son whose birth we celebrate this night, sustain and strengthen us with the power of Your Spirit as we continue our walk toward perfection, because we ask in the powerful name of Jesus, born this night to be our Savior. Amen.

Jane Arnold Capon Bridge, WV
jpasings@frontiernet.net